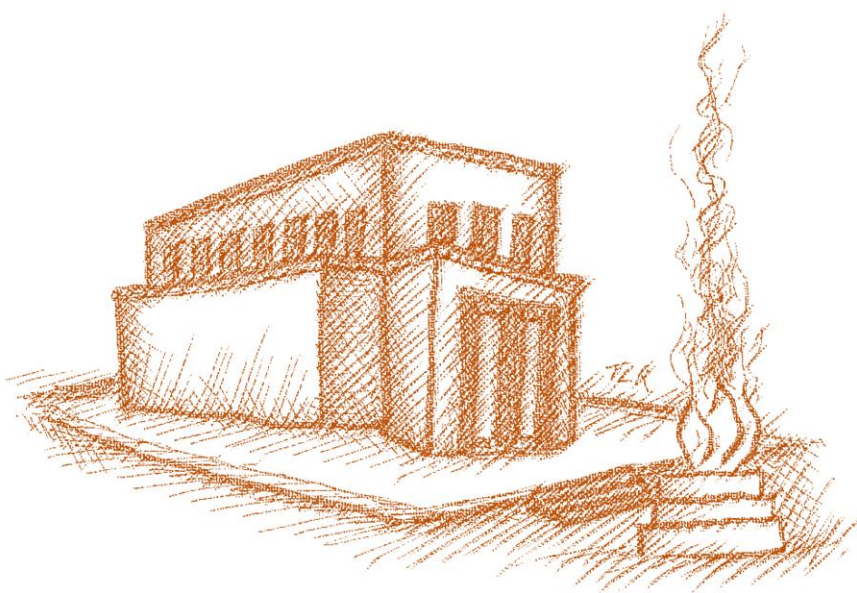


# "Just Another Christmas?"

*Fearing, Loving, and Serving God  
in The Day of Small Things...*



Zerubbabel's Temple

*"For who hath despised the day of small things?"*

*—Zech. 4:10 (KJV)*

Valley Grace Brethren Church of Armagh, PA  
December 3<sup>rd</sup>, AD 2023

# The LORD'S Day

The Third Day of December, *in the Year of our Lord 2023*

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Welcome to the worship services of Valley Grace Brethren Church!



## Sunday School—9:30 AM.



"The stupendous miracle of the incarnation – a divine Person adding a true human nature to His personhood without becoming two persons – was essential for our salvation. Jesus Christ was not just a man, not even a sinless man like Adam before his fall, but one Person who was both God and man.

Therefore He was fully capable of paying for the sins of the entire human race when He died upon a cross."—Dr. John C. Whitcomb

## Morning Worship—10:30 AM.

Call to Worship:\* *"Go Tell it on the Mountain"* (#53, Chorus only).

Invocation.\*

Hymn: *"Hark the Herald Angels Sing"* (#125).

Prayer for Tithes & Offerings.

Scripture Reading: *Haggai 2:I-9, 20-22.*

Prayer, Praises, and Testimony.

Hymn: *"Good Christian Men, Rejoice"* (#119).

Announcements.

Hymn: *"Angels From the Realms of Glory"* (#124).

Dismissal of Youth for Children's Church.

Greeting One Another.

Message: *"JUST ANOTHER CHRISTMAS?"*

Closing Hymn:\* *"Go Tell it on the Mountain"* (#127).

Benediction.\*



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*\*The Congregation will please arise, if able.*



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YouTube Channel: "Terry Reese;" [rumble](#) Channel: TerryReese

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## Wednesday Prayer & Bible Study: 6:30 PM

Please join us for our midweek service, as we will begin studying the narrative of Daniel and the Lion's Den (Dan. 6). While this may be one of the best known so-called "children's" Bible stories, there is much more here than what initially meets the eye!



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### Week of Nov. 26 – Dec. 2

Sunday School—6; Morning Worship—I4;

Midweek—4; Weekly Offering—\$400.<sup>00</sup>

CEF Christmas Party—I2 (5 Kids, 4 VGBC, 3 CEF)

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## In Memoriam



We at Valley Grace Brethren offer our sincere condolences unto Laura and the extended family of our dear brother, Ralph Goodlin. We are thankful for the good & precious gift of Ralph's life (*James 1:17*), and for his testimony and service unto the Lord.

When a brother in Christ passes, it is indeed natural and appropriate that we grieve (even as our Lord mourned Lazarus in John 11:35), but as Christians we do not grieve in the manner that the unbelieving world does—without hope (*1 Thss. 4:13*)!

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"Man's Maker was made man that He, Ruler of the stars, might nurse at His mother's breast; that the Bread might hunger, the Fountain thirst, the Light sleep, the Way be tired on its journey; that Truth might be accused of false witnesses, the Teacher be beaten with whips, the Foundation be suspended on wood; that Strength might grow weak; that the Healer might be wounded; that Life might die."—Augustine



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Cover art: "*The Day of Small Things*" by Pastor Terry L. Reese

# The First Christmas: Why did God's Son come to planet Earth?

by DR. JOHN C. WHITCOMB

Is there anything special about planet Earth that God the Father would send His Son, Jesus Christ the Lord, through Whom the universe was created (John 1:3), all the way down from the third heaven to this tiny speck in the ocean of space? First of all, how far did He have to come to get here? The psalmist asks, *"Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high, Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!"* (Ps. 113:5-6). If God must humble Himself to behold the universe, how much more must He humble Himself to find the Milky Way (one of billions of galaxies), and the solar system of planets orbiting our sun (one of a hundred billion stars in our galaxy) and then planet Earth (one of the smaller planets)? The universe is infinite in its magnitude as far as human beings are concerned, for God has assured us that *"if heaven above can be measured...I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD"* (Jer. 31:37). Which means, of course, that we can never measure it! No, *"the host of heaven cannot be numbered"* (Jer. 33:22), for *"the stars of the heaven"* are as numerous as *"the sand which is upon the seashore"* (Gen. 22:17). Then, why did God's Son come to our tiny planet Earth? The answer is biblically clear: only the Earth is inhabitable and has inhabitants. The prophet Isaiah informs us that God *"formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, he created it not in vain* [like all the other planets in the universe], *he formed it to be inhabited"* (Isa. 45:18). But – amazing to contemplate – not only plants and animals live here, but also human beings who possess the image and likeness of God! That is why the Creator of everything (Col. 1:16) by-passed all the other galaxies, all the other stars in our galaxy and the bigger planets in our solar system (Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune) and came here to become a permanent member of the human race inside the body of a Jewish woman. That is the permanent wonder of Christmas. Our personal existence began here (for Adam and Eve by creation, and for the rest of us by procreation). But God's Son existed as the Second Person of the Godhead forever before He added a human nature (body, soul and spirit) to His divine nature: *"The Word [God's Son] was made flesh [human], and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth"* (John 1:14). Yes, that is the message of Christmas: the beloved Son of God rejoiced with the Father for all eternity *"before the world was"* (John 17:5), and then 2,000 years ago came all the way down from *"the third heaven"* (2 Cor. 12:2) to this exclusively inhabited planet to pay in full the penalty for sin which we could never pay. What love, what mercy and what grace! As one has so appropriately observed: *"We had a debt we could not pay. He paid a debt He did not owe"* (author unknown). *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16). Merry Christmas!